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The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

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THE BEGGAR

I had not anything to give, that I could
think worth-while,
But he was so disconsolate I thought per-
haps a smile
Might cheer him up; distract his mind,
bring back another day,
When rags were not his raiment and
poverty his pay—
He had not anything to give yet when I
clasped his hand
I felt a warm glow in his heart and
tightening of the hand
That builds all men in brotherhood,
whate'er be their estate
And there we stood with outstretched
hand, both begging at life's gate.

THE WAY THROUGH

We live and move and have our being in the economic world. This has always been an area of uncertainty, misunderstanding and clash of interest, since Cain and Abel quarreled over the difference between fruit culture and animal husbandry, and Jacob cheated Esau, his brother, out of his birthright. We are constantly reminded that we belong to an economic order whose laws and regulations have been chiefly controlled by the profit idea. . . . We are beginning to recognize that destructive competition is harmful to civilization and contrary to the laws of God and the teaching of Jesus Christ, who himself came from the laboring class and mingled freely during his life on earth with both the rich and the poor. He chose his disciples from both classes, and taught them to pray "*our* Father," proclaiming the common Fatherhood of God and the consequent Brotherhood of Man. Only by fraternal and friendly co-operation can the problems of the economic world be solved.

Jesus Christ laid down regulations for the government of society which have stood unshaken for nearly two thousand years. The only criticism brought against them has been that they were too idealistic for the control of men moved by ambition, passion, pride and greed. In his incomparable Sermon on the Mount he pronounced upon various classes of peoples special favor and blessing. Jesus did not declare a blessing upon national dictators, captains of industry, controllers of wealth; but "Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, blessed are those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the peacemakers."

Here we find an adequate standard for the control of human society for all peoples and in all time. These principles can be applied to every age, under all conditions, and will, when so applied, produce the perfect society. In the 1900 years not one jot or one tittle of the efficacy of this pronounced ideal for a prosperous, happy and peaceful society has passed away.

Other nations, like our own, while retaining much of the traditional forms of government, are experimenting with processes unknown to the fathers. This new awakening of nationalism has aroused a new sense of fear. As national consciousness increases everywhere, with exalted estimate of national importance, uncertainty takes the place of security and nations prepare to protect themselves against potential enemies. The standards to which the people of the nations of the earth seem to rally are those of political independence, safety by armaments and economic prosperity.

We must go back of all these agencies to that standard which was raised by

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Jesus when he proclaimed the brotherhood of man as the foundation of human society. The solidarity of the life of the world must constitute the basis of constructive and permanent peace. Each must understand that when one member of that national life suffers all suffer with it; that when one is prosperous all are prosperous with it.

The highest patriotism must be international, which will enable every loyal citizen of every country to say with the Apostle Paul, "I am a citizen of the whole world."

A prominent church leader recently said: "In this great crisis in the moral and spiritual history of our race let us make no mistake as to what we need. It certainly is not more science, more knowledge, more machinery or even more money, but a new spiritual power." Another writer in a secular journal says: "People turn to Jesus Christ now as the great expositor of life, of economics, of national and international relations, and that is the vision of those who are looking forward to a world reconstructed on new principles, rather than a return to what we had and what has failed us." . . . "The new cult will count on a saving power that can be reached and used if one can learn the technique of using it. It is a spiritual power."

The great meetings of religious leaders within the past few months have been emphatic in their declaration that the hope of our country and of mankind lies in the ability of the followers of Jesus Christ to tap the vast resources of spiritual power and convey and apply that power to every phase of human relations.

There is a general conviction that theology and creeds can be of no service now. These standards lead to divisions and heart-burnings and blind the vision to the great realities of the moral and spiritual world.

Sectarianism must sink out of sight and the professed followers of Jesus stand bound to him by a devotion which stops at no sacrifice. An increasing number of leaders in all walks of life recognize the need. A vastly increasing number are reaching the conviction that dynamic moral and spiritual resources are ready whenever men and women form the connection between human necessity and divine availability.

By spiritual resources we mean the application of the eternal principles of right which the Gospel of Jesus inculcates and all sober judgments recognize as the only guaranty of prosperity, happiness and peace. These are justice, righteousness, honesty, compassion, purity and the recognition in belief and practice of the brotherhood of all mankind.

There must be back of it all a conviction that this pattern sprang from the heart of the Eternal and that back of it and in it are the resources of the mind that rules the world.

There is no need of appeal to any form of religion to establish the principle that humility is superior to arrogance, righteousness to iniquity, honesty to racketeering, justice to tyranny, purity to licentiousness, compassion to cruelty and peace to war.

These are self-evident and self-proclaiming principles that are accepted by all peoples of all religions as desirable and worthy and, if universally applied, would create a worthy state of society in which peace and prosperity would reign.

Other great religions in one form or another proclaim some of these same principles as ideal. They are not exclusively Christian. They are universally acknowledged to be unalterably and forever right. These standards would be as true and commanding if proclaimed by Confucius, Buddha and Mohammed, or if found in the Vedas of Hinduism, for they announce the eternal principles which in all

conditions and in all ages match human needs. It is only in the power of the eternally true and the universally right that this generation can lift up a standard that shall lead human society into the making of a worthy world.

—From a Sermon by Dr. James L. Barton.

GREAT THOUGHTS FROM THE RELIGIONS OF MANKIND

IV. Judaism

It was about 2000 years B. C., that Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, a land bordering on the Persian Gulf and near the sources of the Tigris River; and he, together with his descendants, became the founder of a new country and a new religion. This faith has a deeper significance to us than any other because we have in it the background of our Christian faith.

To Abraham belongs the credit, the honor and the glory of having created a new era in the religious life of mankind. Born and raised among a people who believed in many gods (Polytheism) and whose father was an idolater and a maker of wooden images before which the people bowed down in worship, he came, "through some deep and solemn vision," to believe in one supreme God, "Monotheism."

This faith of Abraham has gone before the Hebrews in their leaders, struggles, and captivities, and still goes with them in their wanderings and persecutions over the face of the earth. With Abraham will ever be associated the belief in "Monotheism," and the life of the Hebrew people will always be inseparable from the history of their religion. Here are some great and familiar expressions of their faith:—

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light; and there was light. God created man in his own image; male and female created he them.

From everlasting to everlasting thou art God. And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. Thou shalt say unto the Children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. Arise therefore and go; have not I commanded thee?

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind and with all thy strength. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The Lord was not in the wind, the earthquake or the fire, but after the fire in a still small voice.

Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding. There is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding. Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord. Thou wilt show me the path of life: In thy presence is fulness of joy. Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee. The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. Let justice roll down as waters and righteousness as an overflowing stream. What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

Thou shalt not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord.

Where there is no vision the people perish. I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions. The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

—Rev. Frederic W. Smith.

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

Chairman, The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

A correspondent writing to the Exchange for the first time should always give as reference the name and address of her minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

APPEALS

1. Mrs. L. S. Hill, Oakboro, N. C., wishes to thank the one who sent her the fruit last spring. She would like quilt scraps and reading, and pencils and paper to help her two children, 6 and 7 years old, in their school work.

2. I live 25 miles from town and 2 miles from the post office. I like to sew and read, so any kind of cheer would be appreciated. If it is not asking too much, I would like the True Story Magazine. Miss Myra Lavender, Pera, Va.

3. Mrs. Mary Lyon, Rt. 2, Alvord, Tex., writes that their garden this year yielded only 14 bushels of peanuts and one bale of cotton. Her 10-year-old daughter walks a mile and a half to school, and would be glad to receive any cheer or school supplies.

4. I have a big fine boy 3 months old and a little girl 3 years old. I would enjoy getting something to amuse them, and quilt scraps or anything you would care to send me. Mrs. Blair Kilby, Rugby, Va.

5. Mrs. Olean Walker, Rt. 4, Chillicothe, Tex., would appreciate patchwork, embroidery, or reading. She has a little girl 3 years old, and two boys 5 and 7. Her little sister, 11 years old, has lived with her for seven years as her mother and father are dead. She will be glad of school materials.

6. I wish to thank you all for the cheer you have sent us. I will be pleased to have any kind of sewing, print pieces, or good reading for my daughter, 8 years old, and my son 12. Mrs. J. W. Frerichs, Rt. 7, Athens, Tenn.

7. Mr. Alvin Merrifield, Borger, Tex., is 15 years old and lives with his father and little sister. He has to wash the dishes. Because of the small crop, they are not able to get school supplies. He would appreciate a dictionary, theme paper, map to color and pencils.

8. Due to crop failure we are unable to send our two boys, aged 6 and 8, to school so I intend to teach them at home as much as possible. Anything in that line, also thread and quilt pieces, would be most welcome. Mrs. Icylona Summers, Rt. 2, Scotland, Ark.

9. I have been a silent reader of the *Cheerful Letter* for some time. I am a newly married woman and get very lonely at times. I should love some embroidery thread, crocheting or quilt scraps. Mrs. Wm. Thompson, Brandon, N. C.

10. Mrs. E. L. Oquim, Manchester,

N. C., desires some reading matter, especially McCall's Magazine, also quilt pieces. Her 18-year-old daughter is really a child in mentality. She would like pictures and embroidery thread as she tries to sew.

11. I am 11 years old and have been crippled with infantile paralysis since I was 2 years old. I can walk some better since I came out of the hospital the last time. I have never been to school but my mother taught me to read and write. My parents are poor and I have two older brothers. I would be glad of reading and quilt pieces. Miss Lollie Roberts, Rt. 2, Box 101, Grassy Creek, N. C.

12. Mrs. C. H. Tucker, Rt. 1, Peachland, N. C., would appreciate reading or other cheer. Neither she nor her little 3-year-old boy is well, and she gets very lonely when her 6-year-old son is at school.

13. I have enjoyed many pleasant hours through my *Cheerful Letter* correspondence. My father died last October at the age of 90, and I miss him very much. Minnie Aungst, Sunfield, Mich.

14. Mrs. Laura Lynch, Cleveland, Ark., is a widow with five children, one of them a cripple. She, herself, was run over by an automobile and permanently injured. She lost her home and now lives on rented land.

15. I am a poor farmer's wife and work hard. I should like some reading matter and pieces for quilts. My four small children would appreciate books and games. Mrs. F. D. Thompson, Rt. 1, Norwood, N. C.

16. Mrs. W. L. Greer, Rt. 2, Marion, Va., has eight children, four of them in school. Her husband has been unable to do any work since he was in the army. She would enjoy any kind of cheer.

17. I would be pleased to receive materials for applique and embroidery, also wool and embroidery thread. Books and magazines, especially the Cosmopolitan and Geographic, would be very welcome. Miss Kathleen Wann, Rt. 1, Canton, Tex.

18. Mrs. H. L. Kepley, Rt. 2, Norwood, N. C., lives far from a town. She has a garden and does a good deal of canning. She is a widow with two daughters. She would be most grateful for cards, books or magazines.

19. My 13-year-old boy is in the 4th grade and would appreciate some books. I also have a little girl, 2 years old. We live 10 miles from town, so only go there once a year. Mrs. Amanda Brown, Rt. 1, Decatur, Tenn.

20. Mrs. Pearl Beverage, Rt. 1, Kingsland, Ark., would be very thankful to receive sewing material. Her boy is 8 years old and the girls are 11 and 13.

21. Mrs. Alma Appleton Newcomb, No. Brewer, Me., writes: I lost my dear husband last spring, and seem so weak ever since. I have not been able to write. I am trying to be cheerful and would welcome letters if postage for reply is sent. She would also like any used postage stamps.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

I wish to express my thanks for the *Cheerful Letter*, which I have received from the very first number. It was the help and inspiration of my family as they grew up. All had the benefit that can come only from growing up with good books and papers. I am very lame with rheumatism and want to write while I can, for these days it often gets in my hands, too. I read every word of the Magazine more than once, and pass it on to others. Mrs. Sarah Gilbert, 405 Maple St., Atlantic, Iowa.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Mrs. Moore Altman from 116 N. 9th Ave. to 901 Dolin St., Hopewell, Va.

Miss Minnie Foster from Madison Heights to 414 Bridge St., Covington, Va.

Mrs. James Griner from Acree to R. F.D., Rt. 4, Sylvester, Ga.

Mrs. Hobart Webb from Stella to Rt. 3, Box 21, Spencer, Va.

Mrs. Verla Merrifield from Chillicothe to Borger, Texas.

Mrs. Blair Kilby from Helton, N. C., to Rugby, Va.

Mrs. Mary Lyon from Chillicothe to Rt. 2, Alvord, Texas.

LITTLE JOURNEYS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

Only once in his life did George Washington travel beyond the bounds of his native country, and then only as far as the West Indies. He never saw Europe or the Mississippi River; yet his biographers agree that he was a much-traveled man, and that his travels played a vital part in making him "first in the hearts of his countrymen."

His activities, from boyhood to maturity, brought him in contact with the men and women of other colonies more freely than any other man of his time. As youthful surveyor of Lord Fairfax's vast estate, he learned to be at home in wilderness camps, to endure hardships, to meet rough frontiersmen, and to understand them. As a militia major, still in his teens, he had his first taste of Indian fighting, and learned as much from friendly chiefs as from hostile arrows.

What the Wild West was to the cowboys on the plains in our day, teaching them courage and endurance, the mountains of pioneer Virginia and the forests of western Pennsylvania were to George Washington.

To realize how much his travels had to do with his greatness, it is necessary to note that during his boyhood Virginia had no cities or towns, no factories or trades, almost no newspapers. Even the stagecoach had not yet appeared; the roads were too crude. Travel was almost all by horseback. Few men knew much about people outside of their own districts. Thus Washington's travels in themselves tended to make him an exceptional man—by giving him a national outlook.

When he was nineteen he sailed with his brother, Lawrence Washington, to Barbados, in the West Indies. The trip was made for the sake of his brother's health, but Lawrence returned to Mount Vernon only to die, and George took smallpox during his visit, and bore the marks of it the rest of his days. Yet the radiant air of that summer isle touched him to new pleasure; he made many friends, and when he returned he was able to describe the island, its scenery, people, customs, government, and resources. That rare thing, the seeing eye, was his from the beginning; but travel improved it.

Only twenty he was, when his beloved brother's death changed everything. He became the executor of Lawrence's estate, and eventually heir to Mount Vernon. It was the end of his youth.

Meanwhile the French had been taking possession of the Ohio Valley as far up as the present site of Pittsburgh, and the French and Indian War was brewing. So at the age of twenty-one George Washington got his next travel experiences as a soldier—an armed messenger to go and warn the French away, and, incidentally, to win the friendship of certain Indian chiefs. He had recently been appointed a major in the Virginia militia, and Governor Dinwiddie chose him for this dangerous work.

Through the forest and over swollen rivers his party traveled, with a wiry old frontiersman for guide, to the far Ohio River country and the French outposts. On the way, the young leader held many palavers with Indian chiefs, usually winning them over to the British side after much speech-making, and, incidentally, learning diplomacy and the control of his own hot temper.

Once, hostile Indians lay in wait and tried to murder the whole party, and at another time Washington fell from a raft amid floating ice, and had to spend a night on an island with his clothes frozen stiff upon him. He was the hero of the hour when he finally brought his little party safely back to Williamsburg.

His next traveling came when General Braddock invited him to join his staff with the rank of colonel. To be attached to a force of British regulars—what an honor! he thought. But he soon discovered that, being a colonial, he was regarded by these soldiers and even by the friendly general as something a good deal lower than a British subject—a contemptuous distinction that undoubtedly helped to throw him into the ranks of the revolutionists twenty years later.

Braddock, as we all know, scorned his young aide's advice on how to fight Indians, and went down to defeat and death in consequence.

Washington came out with the only shreds of glory that were salvaged from this disaster, but the most important result was the lesson he learned about British regulars. He saw that colonial troops could outfight them.

The next year he had a long trip northward. For the first time he saw great cities—great for that time—Philadelphia, New York, Boston.

Brilliant enough the little cavalcade must have looked as they rode through the dark Virginia woods that February day in 1756. First came the Colonel in his buff and blue uniform, a white and scarlet cloak flung over his shoulders. He was mounted on the finest of horses, for he loved and understood these animals as well as he did men. By his side rode two aides, and behind came his servants in the Washington colors, white and scarlet, wearing hats laced with silver. Washington had already learned the value of a good appearance.

The Colonel's fame had gone before him, as one of his biographers reminds us, and "every door flew open to him." On that trip he met many of the best minds on this side of the Atlantic. Then home, to take command of all Virginia's forces on the ravaged frontier, and wear his heart out over Indian atrocities and the delays and neglect of a wrangling assembly. What a school for a proud man's patience!

"The supplicating tears of the women and moving petitions of the men," he wrote in 1757, "melt me into such deadly sorrow that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

Years pass, and one long August day in 1774 we see Washington and two fellow delegates mounting their horses to ride to Philadelphia and attend the first Continental Congress.

Again he rubs shoulders with the ablest men of the other colonies. Yet, "If you speak of solid information and sound judgment, Colonel Washington is unquestionably the greatest man on that floor," we hear Patrick Henry declare.

It is not a rebellious gathering, but Washington and many others come away from it with a vision of America united, armed, belligerent for her rights. He has learned the views of every leader of every section, and is thereby the better fitted to hold the loyalty of all during the war, and later as President.

One fateful day during the second Congress, when the war has already begun in New England, we see John Adams rise and declare that Congress must adopt all the colonial armies and make Washington their commander-in-chief. At mention of his name, Washington modestly steps out of the room; but with no thought of shirking this great responsibility. A few days later we see him setting off on the longest journey of all, which is to last seven weary years. He is on his way to Boston to take command of the heroes of Bunker Hill and the rest of the Continental Army, and to face the task of wresting liberty from a British government that is not wise or big enough to understand its American colonies.

A single episode at the close of the war goes far to explain Valley Forge, Yorktown, and all the rest of it. Revolt had flared up in Washington's own army. Threatening violence, his soldiers refused to disband without their hard-earned pay, which an incompetent Congress had failed to give them.

Mutinous officers called a meeting to put through their plans. In the face of peril, Washington calmly took control of that meeting himself. When the officers assembled, he rose with a manuscript in his hand, and took out his glasses, saying quietly: "You see, gentlemen, I have grown both gray and blind in your service."

A few simple, strong words, full of affection, exhorting them to be true to their glorious past, and in a moment the whole atmosphere was changed. The soldiers waited, and in time got their pay.

Only a man of Washington's character and poise could have done it.

The most momentous fruit of Washington's travels, perhaps, was his ability to see the need of a strong central government when the new nation was groping its way, and the experiment of a loose confederation was carrying it upon the rocks. The value of his guidance at the convention that adopted the present Constitution can never be overestimated.

It is pleasant to recall him to view, in the mind's eye, as he was setting out upon the famous journey that he made in the spring of 1789, when he left his beloved Mount Vernon again, to become the first President of the United States.

The nation's capital was then in New York, and his whole journey thither was one long triumphal march. At Baltimore a cavalcade of citizens escorted him, and cannon boomed a welcome. Into Philadelphia he rode beneath colossal arches. At Trenton, where he had once crossed the Delaware in snow and darkness to surprise the enemy, young girls strewed flowers in his sunny path.

He entered New York on a barge manned by thirteen pilots in white uniform, while a procession of other barges swept after him with music and huzzas, and all the ships in the harbor, streaming with flags, fired salutes in his honor.

And so we leave him for the present, clad in his familiar buff and blue, as the people throng the Battery and lower Broadway and cheer with doffed hats at sight of the stately figure they have learned to love.

—Clifford Smyth in The Literary Digest.

THE LIGHT OF LIFE

The greatest curse of humanity is darkness, in which a human being feels lost, groping blindly, seeing no way out, crashing into unseen obstacles, seeing no light to go by. Sometimes our darkness is that of fear, when we close our eyes from panic, and so make our own darkness. Sometimes it is our ignorance, our failure to learn the precious secrets of victory. Whatever the cause, we need light.

The great preacher, Phillips Brooks, once said as he looked forward to Christmas, "It is the hour before the sunrise. There are a few brave climbers upon the lofty peak, with eyes strained eastward, knowing where the sun must rise, waiting and longing and praying for its rising. There, just below them, still in the dark, not yet touched by the daylight that has reached those highest eyes—still in the dark, but wide-awake and trembling and restless with the vague sense that somewhere new light is coming—are the great multitudes on the mountain-sides. Then down below, filling the valley, lying in the dark fast asleep, or playing idle games, or chasing phantoms which they tried to cheat themselves were worth catching; not even dreaming of a light to come; needing everything, but knowing nothing of their need, were the yet greater multitudes for whom all true life was a blank or a despair, who knew no high desire."

So it was before Christ came. But today no man, no woman need stay in the dark of fear or doubt or hopelessness. The man who has had a hot argument with his friend, with hard feelings roused, need only ask himself, "What would Jesus do about this?" and then ask the Unseen Master to help him carry out the action which restores the friendship. The person who faces a handicapped life through some illness which is no fault of his own, can ask himself, "What would Jesus make out of my life?" and then let the Strong Christ use his life for power and joy. The New England farmer with his rocky soil and his slender income from the mercilessly low prices he gets for his milk and cream, can remember that a penniless teacher in Nazareth, whose name was Jesus, trusted God for food and shelter, and lived the most triumphant and useful life the world has ever seen. Life may be hard, trying our souls, exhausting our patience and bravery over and over again. But we need never be left in the dark—for the Light has come into our darkness if we will open our eyes to let Him light our lives.

—Rev. Allen W. Clark.

DON'T EMPHASIZE—BUT DON'T SUPPRESS CHILD'S FEARS

Usually it is comparatively easy to trace the fount from which a child's fears spring. Loud sounds disturb all small babies, and because their responses to these are marked, they are inclined to be afraid of vacuum sweepers, riveting machines, thunder and other loud noises when they get older.

In addition to this natural fear of loud sounds the child mirrors very accurately those fears which the parent harbors, however clever she thinks herself at concealing them.

The child feels that there must be something to fear when his mother calls to him anxiously, "Hurry home, it's going to storm!"

He feels his mother's tenseness when she hastens to snap on the lights when it is growing dark, or when she threatens to put him in a dark closet, or tells him not to be afraid of a dark room. There is certain, then, to be an assumption that in some way the storm can hurt him, or the darkness has terrors, though unexplained.

Excessive conversation about those fears which the child displays is an effective way of increasing them. The child knows there is importance in those things to which his mother pays unusual attention.

He is not adverse to continuing his exhibitions of naked terror when it is storming, when he has heard over and over again how terribly afraid he is of storms. One of my own memories is of a girl companion who always ran into the bedroom and put her head under a pillow when it thundered. And there she stayed until convinced that the storm was over. Not for worlds would she have forgone doing what we all expected her to do when a storm broke.

This fear of storms is commonplace and parents might do better in some cases to accept it, and ignore it, than to try to argue or laugh the child out of it, a course which usually intensifies his response to it. Better to let him act as he feels he wants to act and pretend not to notice it, and certainly do not discuss it later no matter what he does.

When the lightning streaks brilliantly across the dark sky and the thunder crashes say rather, "That'll make the flowers spring up," or when the rain falls in torrents say, "How badly the earth needs this."

Stories about storms will have to be made up by the ingenious mother, it would seem, for the life of me I can't think of one to suggest. But mother can, if she puts her mind to it and such stories give the child a growing understanding of the phenomena which are a part of daily living. Let him express his fears until he overcomes them naturally. Suppressed fears take strange forms and are sometimes accountable for behavior seemingly unrelated to them.—*Clipped.*

LITTLE JOYS

By Agnes Carr

The little joys that life has brought to me
Have blessed my day with such a rich content;
I cannot wish for joy in large degree,
So many lovely things to me are sent.

The little joys that fill each busy hour
All come from things that every woman knows,
The joy of planting seeds that slowly flower,
The fragile beauty of a budding rose.

The joy of spreading for the evening meal
A table with old china, blue and white;
Of lighting slender candles that reveal
An easy chair and books—inviting sight.

You do not need to seek them far away,
The little joys are with you every day!

All that the ear can harken,
All that can fill the eye,
Is mine by the law of beauty.
—*John White Chadwick.*

Make of disaster an opportunity for your courage.—*G. S. Merriam.*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

"GENERAL PERSHING"

The Training of a Homing Pigeon

By Helen A. Orr

Mister Pigeon sat dejectedly on the porch, cooing softly as he watched his wife on the nest. For 20 days since the laying of the two little, white eggs in the round bowl that held the nest, Mr. Pigeon had sat on the eggs for a third of the time. But now Mrs. Pigeon had driven him away every time he had volunteered to continue his duty. He felt woefully abused.

Finally, he flew about in the interior of the loft, but he kept coming back to look at his wife to know that all was well. Very quietly she sat, not even looking at him when he appeared.

Then suddenly she turned and listened to something. She gave a little start. She moved slightly off one of the eggs. Raising her head, she took aim and with two strokes she cracked the egg open. There was her first born—a tiny bird, all beak and a shivering body! Immediately, the mother covered her helpless baby with her soft breast.

And so the pigeon, "General Pershing," was born!

Homing pigeons make loving and solicitous parents. From the second day, the "General" automatically opened his beak and expanded his body like bellows every time one of the parents flew to the nest. The father and mother put their beaks into their baby's wide-open mouth and poured into it the milk made in their crops from the grain they had eaten. Not until after the tiny bird was a month old was he given any food which had not been first kept in the throat of one of the parents until softened.

The baby pigeon kept the parents busy all the time. The father brooded and worked for him no less hard than the mother. No wonder the child grew fat! His dingy color changed to a yellowish white—the first sign of feathers coming on. Then came the prickly white feathers. The yellow things, that hung about his mouth and eyes, fell away.

When the "General" was but five days old, he had his first close experience with the pigeoneer, whom he was to know so well. The olive-drab figure reached a hand into the compartment and gently but firmly seized the baby bird. He put seamless aluminum bands on the pigeon's legs. USA on the band of the left leg meant that the "General" had been bred and was the property of the United States Army. U S CAV on the right leg showed that the bird was bred by the army at Camp Alfred Vail, now called Fort Monmouth, and gave his serial number.

Whenever the parent birds fed the squeaker, as a young pigeon is called, a rattling sound was heard and as he grew older he associated this noise with feeding time. When the youngster was almost four weeks old, he was separated from his father and mother and put into another compartment with other young birds.

The following morning after the change, the "General" was very hungry as he had had no food since his parents had given it to him. He was put into a basket and then placed on the lighting board on the outside of the loft. Then he heard that welcome sound, the rattle, inside. Instantly, the other birds had passed through the trap door into the loft for food. But the "General," hungry as he was, was interested in the great world outside and hesitated. His hesitation brought a sharp reproof and he dashed through the trap door to safety and food. That afternoon, the squeakers had another trapping exercise and the "General" did not hesitate this time but went through the door immediately.

After two days, the young birds were taken a short distance from the lighting board and allowed to fly and trap as before. As they learned to fly, the distance was increased until the loft was just barely visible almost a mile away. At the end of a week, most of the squeakers had been trained to trap readily.

By this time, "General Pershing's"

feathers had changed in color. His dull gray-blue had a shine and gloss and he had a sleek, wide-awake look. He was growing up!

In the second week of training, the pigeoneer attached message capsules before the morning toss and removed them when the birds trapped after the afternoon flight. The "General" was no more afraid of the man who attended them than he was of the other pigeons. His heart would beat with joy when he heard that soft voice and low whistle.

In the succeeding three weeks, the distances of the flights were increased until the birds were liberated at 50 miles from the loft. Then the better birds were chosen to be long-distance fliers and the rest were kept for short-distance work. Short-distance birds make flights under one hundred miles and are used for signal-communication and the long-distance birds are used chiefly by the air corps. The "General" was chosen to be a long-distance flier because he had performed well and his father and mother were both long-distance birds.

When the pigeon was five months old, he was allowed to have an open trap so that he could go in and out of the loft pretty much as he pleased. For the first time, he learned to go on the ground and search for food. This knowledge was valuable to him later, when he was on long and hard flights and was required to stay out over night.

By the time the "General" was a year old, he had made two 100-mile flights. He would not fly in a fog, probably because he was afraid of hitting high buildings, lighthouses, bluffs and other obstacles. He avoided wide bodies of water by flying around them above the shore lines. Sometimes he flew close to the ground, sometimes very high, depending upon the direction of the air currents. He always took advantage of the wind, if possible.

But before "General Pershing" made a longer flight than 300 miles, he chose his mate! How he preened his feathers and strutted before the bird of his choice!

The two were mated and in due time there were two small, white eggs. After eight days of sitting on the eggs, the hen was given her 500 mile training flight and the cock had his big flight when the baby bird was 10 days old. Both the "General" and his wife made record flights. The homing instinct is strongest when fliers have eggs or a family at the home loft.

On "General Pershing's" next long flight, he ran into bad weather. Wind and rain forced him to the ground, where he was picked up, drenched and battered. But he was carefully cared for by a lover of birds, who let him go two days later.

Somewhat shaken by his experience, he flew straight for home. With the home loft in sight, a hawk appeared suddenly. It charged directly at him, but the pigeon made a dip which frustrated the big bird. Again the hawk dropped on him but the pigeon escaped in the nick of time.

When the "General" flew again he was at first timid and afraid. Furthermore, he wore a whistle attached to his tail feather which made a peculiar sound as he flew through the air. The whistle was made of bamboo so was not heavy and caused him no discomfort, but the noise it made was annoying at first. Perhaps the smart bird realized that his whistle was put on him to drive the hawks away and so he did not mind the sound. Numbers of hawks had appeared in the vicinity of Fort Monmouth. So after seeing the "General's" experience with one, the pigeoneer had had whistles attached to his birds so that he could continue their training without danger. The fliers could not make as good time as usual, however, as the whistles slowed them up considerably and they were not sent on long flights wearing them.

In due time, the "General" had regained his confidence and was flying with his usual speed and fearlessness.

Finally the date of the big race drew near. "General Pershing" with other birds was sent to Washington.

The "Arrow of Gold" was the universal favorite, and everyone interested in the race expected him to win. The pigeoneer at Fort Monmouth, who knew the "Gen-

eral" best, had few hopes of his being the winner, although he considered him a reliable homer.

The day was lowering with low-hanging clouds. To make matters worse, there was a quartering wind, which would be against the fliers.

At 10 o'clock, before a large crowd in front of the Army Building in the capital, Major-General Saltzman released his favorite, as well as the favorite of the entire signal corps, "Arrow of Gold." The onlookers applauded heartily as the bird circled about and took off. Other birds followed at 10-minute intervals. At 11:20 "General Pershing" started, but without especial attention.

At 4:39 P. M. the "General" had trapped into the home loft at Fort Monmouth, causing the electric bell to ring and the stop watch to record his entrance. He had traveled 190 miles in 5 hours and 19 minutes. This, of course, was not done in his usual speed, nor did he establish a record. But he had flown under adverse weather conditions and had beaten the favorite, the "Arrow of Gold," and the other birds. He had won the race! —*Christian Science Monitor.*

It was the morning after the first night of their honeymoon and the groom had given the porter a dollar not to tell anyone they were newlyweds.

But when they went into the dining car everyone stared and commented, so the groom called the porter and asked angrily: "Did you tell anyone we were just married?"

"No, sah," replied the porter. "Ah didn't tell them—*I told them you all was single!*" —*Trolley Topics.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

MRS. HARRY A. STEVENS, *Chairman*, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.
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To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

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